INTERIM REPORT ON THE HEALTH AND SANITARY CIRCUMSTANCES OF THE RURAL DISTRICT OF DRAYTON FOR THE YEAR 1942.

MINISTRY OF HEALTH LIBRARY

Mr.Chairman & Gentlemen,

Once again the Ministry of Health has required that the Report on the Health of the District shall be presented in an abbreviated interim form. This being so, exhaustive statistical figures have been avoided and such as are given have been confined to those of a domestic nature and of local interest.

Infectious Diseases notified locally have been considered in a special section of the Report and attention has been drawn to the sharp outbreak of Diphtheria which occurred in the Third Quarter of the Year.

Over the country, generally, despite War conditions and the stringency of the times, acute infective diseases have shown little or no rise, with the exception of Cerebro-Spinal Fever - a disease from which this District escaped completely. It may be, however, that that condition associated with the maintainance of the good health of a country - cleanliness - has shewn some deterioration. The frequency of Scabies seems to denote a lack of this and Scabies has been much in the mind in the past twelve months.

Turning to that more chronic infective condition - Tuberculosis- over the Country there has been a rise following a prewar decline which had been continuous from the end of the First War. In some measure to meet this a system of Mass Radiography has been evolved. To expedite the examination of patients and at the same time to bring within the scope of preventive medicine a large section of adolescency and young adults (the 20-30 age group) a system of X ray

photography has been invented which should be the means of bringing to light many unsuspected cases. By this system of mass X ray examination the time should not be far distant when every adult will be subjected to this type of examination at the period of greatest succeptibility. The relationship of this disease to your District is dealt with at the end of this Report.

To combat and further prevention the Ministry of Health nas made arrangements to deal with the possible onset and spread of Typhus Fever - a disease from which this Country is now completely free. The danger of this gaining a foothold lies in the large proportion of our population at present abroad returning to this Country and . coupled with this the rapid means for that return. The Continent has not enjoyed this same freedom from Typhus and the danger is thereby emphasised.

Venereal Disease has shewn an unwelcomed increase in frequency and has been much discussed. To further prevention certain measures have been taken by Parliament to restrict, principally, the infected female from being a cause of further spread and it is now possible to deal with such cases compulsorily - on report. Much diversity of opinion exists as to the relative weight to be given to medical and moral teachings in attempting to secure eradication.

Small-Pox, an infrequent and undesired visitor, has evidenced itself at periods in the Year. Scotland has been mainly affected and only rare cases have occurred on this side of the Border and no epidemics have arisen.

A precautionary measure, new in so far as to its general applicability to this Country, has had to be taken in relationship

to static water supplies. This one of the protective weapons used in the defence of the Country is by reason of its nature a possible breeding ground for mosquitoes. The steps to prevent this has been the subject of a memorandum from the Ministry of Health.

Preventive Medicine has become a State-Controlled Branch of the Science and during the Year much conjecture and publicity has been given to the possibility of taking Medicine generally under this same control, in a socialised form. The opening of Health Centres to deal with all diseases with attendant Doctors and Specialists, as required, is envisaged and while it would appear that some form of Service of this nature will result the shape and scope has still to be agreed and decided.

Complementary with the above the status of those Servants of Medicine, Nurses, has received much consideration and the resultant has been the stabilisation of their system of working and remuneration.

In the immediate neighbourhood particular attention has been directed to the need for a higher standard of Cleanliness in Milk. In this connection preliminary steps have been taken, in association with the Local Agricultural College, to formulate a scheme for local sampling. It is hoped that by this means it may be possible to eradicate that substratum of milk producers who are at present supplying a liquid of an inferior standard of cleanliness.

It is pleasing to note that as a resultant of the special care and supervision of the Diet of Children there have been no adverse effects on the Health and Weight, as a result of the War. Among the people generally better use is being made of the more ordinary foods in the home and it has been found possible to live satisfactorily on the

restricted rations now in force. The lessening of Neurosis reported over the Country has been ascribed to persons being more occupied and busy and free from the fear of unemployment.

The Medical Officer of Health takes this opportunity of thanking your Sanitary Inspector for his care and attention in carrying out the duties of his office and for a pleasant association during the course of the Year.

POPULATION. No changes of domestic interest have been noted in the returns received.

CERTAIN Figures and Statistics supplied by the Ministry of Health.

	Males.	Females.
Live Births	69.	78.
Illegitimate:	5.	5.
Still Births	2.	1.

Deaths of Infants under 1 years of age - 7.

Deaths (Generally)	Males.	Females.
	58.	39.

Principal Causes of Deaths were :-

Pulmonary Tuberculosis	- 1.
Non- " "	- 2.
Cancer.....	12.
Cerebral Haemorrhage.....	7.
Heart disease.....	42.
Pneumonia.....	5.

There was 1 death from acute infective (notifiable) disease.

WATER SUPPLIES. With the scattering of many hamlets and clusters of houses throughout the District, a main centralised supply serving all areas is an impossibility and dependence has to be placed on many individual sources of limited capacity. To such your Sanitary Inspector gives the closest supervision - sampling, extending services and always aiming for improvement. Much of the time of your

Officer goes to the maintainance of those widely dispersed and restricted supplies.

During the course of the Year, besides meeting the demands of applicants for water connections (chiefly in the Ightfield and Hodnet Districts), the following received particular attention :-

Ercall Heath: Unsatisfactory well supply at Styche Cottages remedied.

Tern Hill: Investigations of the water supply as a possible cause of an outbreak of epidemic disease in a congested area were made. Several sources were examined and one, found to be polluted, was treated until samples gave satisfactory results.

Bellaport: The well supply to certain farm cottages was found to be contaminated through its being used for the washing of farm implements. This well was ordered to be cleaned but this has not been done. To tide over the intervening period the affected tenants were offered the facilities of the main supply at Norton-in-Hales - this water to be carried to the cottages at the expense of the users.

Marchamley: This supply, under private ownership, had been giving unsatisfactory results from time to time on sampling and, in addition, the quantity supplied had been found to be inadequate and not in agreement with the expected gallonage from pumping records. On investigation the reservoir was found to be leaking and allowing a loss of some 6000 gallons per day. The owner's attention was drawn to this and, as a result, he made an offer to hand over the reservoir and distributory system to the Council to

come under the direct management and control of that Authority. The owner is retaining the source of supply and pipage up to the connection with the reservoir. Negotiations to complete the transfer are now in progress.

Hawkestone Hall; The supply to these premises was sampled and found to be polluted. Investigations showed that there was a defective cover to the reservoir and, on this being repaired, results of a satisfactory nature were obtained.

Hopton Hall Farm. The protection of this supply was found to be faulty and suggestions were made for improvement. These have not been carried out.

Cloverley Hall School. An extension to the above was completed in the course of the Year.

Moreton Say and Bletchley. Complaints of shortage have been received from these districts and their surrounds.

Samples of both the principal supplies of the Council and lesser ones under private ownership have been submitted for analyses at frequent intervals. Generally the Council's waters have given satisfactory returns but many wells, privately owned, have been found to be contaminated.

There is no system of chlorination in the District.

SEWERAGE AND DRAINAGE. Associated with the constant improvement of the water supplies drainage and sewage disposal advances have been suggested and, in certain instances, completed to the satisfaction of the Sanitary Inspector.

Hodnet: Plans and proposals for disposing of sewage at the local Hospital were submitted at the beginning of the Year and a modern

up-to-date system had been completed and was in operation by December.

In the same District a Sub-Committee considered improving the main drainage with the introduction of an inspection chamber at the junction of Shrewsbury and Station Roads - the channel of flow to be enlarged. This work has not been completed.

It is felt that in this area (Hodnet) with the improved water supplies there should be a concurrent improvement in the sanitation with the provision of a main sewer and adequate modern disposal plant. This would allow for extensions to be made to houses at present served by primitive forms of sanitation. In addition this would permit the installation of modern washing and bathing conveniences. It is hoped that the construction of a suitable main sewer and disposal plant will have the early consideration of the Council.

HOUSING. While it has been impossible to obtain extensive repairs and reconstruction of property generally, a limited number have been able to receive attention - in the Park Heath and Hodnet Areas. There would appear to be a certain shortage of housing accommodation and a number of cases of overcrowding. On the other hand, as a result of the dearth of agricultural labour a few houses attached to farms have for periods been empty.

In the course of routine inspection some properties have been found to be in such a state of uncleanliness as to necessitate fumigation and general redecoration. During the course of the Year a limited amount of bedding has had to be destroyed.

MEAT AND FOODS. This District continues to be served with butcher meat from the Central Abattoir at Whitchurch. This depot, situated outside the North-Eastern Area of the County, has in the past been inspected by the Officers from Whitchurch and its surrounds. It was felt, however, that as Drayton District participated in the supply system they should provide some service for inspection. Accordingly, Market Drayton and Drayton were approached to send their Sanitary Inspectors on certain days to carry out this work. Drayton Rural Council were able to respond to this call and your Sanitary Inspector now attends at Whitchurch Abattoir one day in every fortnight. Shortly after the inception of this scheme your Officer presented a report on conditions at this slaughter house and suggested certain improvements to facilitate inspection and to attain a higher standard of cleanliness.

Factories have been inspected and a new food industry, started at Cheswardine, was the subject of repeated visits to obtain an improved level of hygiene. The nature of the food and the extensive distribution contemplated necessitated the provision of more abundant washing and sanitary conveniences. Recommendations were made to meet the needs of the Sanitary Department and these have now been carried out.

Bakeries. In one case at Hinstock new drainage has been constructed and the building thereby much improved for its function. Your Sanitary Inspector feels that, locally, the introduction of baking and cake-making is too often associated with the use of old buildings adapted to meet the new demands and, in many cases, this adaptation is not entirely satisfactory. He feels that bakers should

be urged to adopt modal plans in the construction of their buildings. It must be agreed that the production of this staple food deserves a home meeting the highest hygienic requirements.

In the year, a small amount of food has been condemned and confiscated. This comprised mainly of tinned articles and ham.

MILK AND DAIRIES. Regular inspections have been made of the farms and dairies in the District and while it is not possible in these times to demand extensive reconstructions and improvements, in certain cases suggested reconditioning has been completed satisfactorily.

At Lostford Hall, where milk production had been the subject of investigation as to cleanliness a change of tenancy in the Year, together with the extensive improvements contemplated on this property should ensure the production of a cleaner article.

In the Tarn Hill Area sporadic attacks of Diarrhoea of uncertain origin led to a general investigation of the purity and methods of production of milk in that District. The reports of the Analyst in each case was satisfactory.

Preliminary meetings were held with a Representative from Harper Adam's Agricultural College with a view to the inauguration of a scheme for local sampling, the end being the raising of the average level of cleanliness. Although it is expected that this will be able to be carried out for the time no further action has been taken.

Licences have been granted to farmers taking up milk production.

INFECTIOUS DISEASES. After the heavy incidence of Measles in 1941, there was a comparative absence of this disease. In all some 10 cases were notified and these were scattered widely over the Area. The Second Half of the Year was the period of occurrence.

Whooping Cough maintained the numbers of the previous year: 34 cases in all were notified and these again were confined mainly to the second six months. Hodnet was the district principally affected and 20 cases were brought to notice in the month of August.

Diphtheria showed a marked increase in numbers: 23 cases in all were notified as compared with 4 in 1941. The period of this disease was almost entirely restricted to the third quarter and was very localised. The District of Hodnet and Tern Hill accounted for over two-thirds and of the remainder 3 cases occurred in Woore and around. As a result of investigation it was decided that the disease had been carried into the District and was fostered by local segregation. A high percentage of the patients were above the age group protected by immunisation and it seemed as if the age group 15-30 years had shewn a peculiar succeptibility to attack and had become vulnerable to this, in its normal state, a disease of childhood. The patients were dealt with mainly in the local Isolation Hospital and, despite difficulties in maintaining an adequate service of nurses, received every care and attention. From the total number of cases there was one death. In this District where a high percentage of the child population had already taken advantage of the free prophylactic treatment for diphtheria prevention the Local Authority continued to offer this service until the month of May when the County Health Authority took over the clinical side of this work. Diphtheria Immunisation is now carried out at the local Health Centre and, in the more remote parishes, in schools. The Returns made at the end of the Year showed that of the child population over one and under fifteen years of age, 37.5 % under five years and 85.6 % over had availed themselves of the

facilities offered.

There was also a sharp rise in the incidence of Scarlet Fever which disease accounted for 12 cases. These again were confined almost entirely to the second half of the year and the infection generally was of a mild character. The district around Hodnet was the main focus: the great majority of the patients coming from that neighbourhood.

Cases of typhoid and paratyphoid are not uncommon in rural areas where a high efficiency of sanitation is often not able to be maintained even with the closest supervision. During the course of the year 3 cases of Paratyphoid were notified and all occurred in the month of December. In each instance the attack was mild in character, the chronic nature of the intestinal infection leading to bacteriological investigation when the true cause of the illnesses was revealed. No source of infection was ascertained and there appeared to be no connection between the patients and a possible common infective agent. These cases were dealt with at the County Isolation Hospital.

Pneumonia accounted for seven cases and these were notified uniformly over the twelve months. There was one case of Erysipelas. In common with the rest of the North-East Salop Area and with the Country generally cases of Scabies were not infrequently notified, principally through the school returns. Some of these cases were dealt with at the central Health Clinic in Market Drayton and a few at the Shawbury Public Assistance Institution where the County Health Authority has set aside some beds for this purpose. The latter is a convenience to those living in the parishes adjacent and it was from these parishes that the patiants were sent. Practically no advantage

was taken of the facilities offered through the central authority scheme at Newport; the very few cases which were sent came from other sources than through the local sanitary service. From time to time cases of long standing and apparently in need of regularised treatment were investigated by the Sanitary Inspector and it was found in every case possible to arrange local treatment and so allow the patients to continue to live in their homes. While it is to be hoped that the fall in frequency of cases of this disease experienced recently will be maintained it is desirable that such as come to notice should be treated thoroughly and expeditiously and every advantage should be taken of such centres as are able to give the most modern skilled attention.

The numbers on the Tuberculosis Register at the end of the Year were as follows :-

	Males.		Females.	
	Pulmonary.	Non-Pulmonary.	Pulmonary.	Non-Pulmonary.
1941.	6.	22.	7.	19.
1942.	9.	24.	6.	19.

The above shows a rise in the number of males affected by pulmonary disease, but the grand total for all types of cases remains comparatively steady.

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